

Vern Poythress Premium Episode

Joel: [00:00:00] How can you help your young sons to grow up to become men of God? That is what we are talking about in today's episode. And we're going to talk about how to foster the transition where your boys become men through a ceremony called the Bar Yeshua rite of passage. This is a Christian coming of age ceremony that I really hope catches on now.

As a Christian man, you are trying to lead and guide your family. You want to build a legacy in the Christian worldview. That means that you need to be training up the younger generation, the next generation of Christian men. And if God has blessed you with sons, then you need to be preparing them to face a hostile, sinful world.

Armed with confidence in God's word, personal piety and spiritual discipline, confidence in being able to articulate and defend his Christian worldview. And it wouldn't hurt if he could be strong enough physically to defend himself and [00:01:00] others.

How are we going to make that happen?

I've got two boys, myself,

And this is something that I've been thinking about for a long time. And so I knew that if I was going to answer this question, I needed to bring on someone who had walked through the process. himself with his boys and someone whose theology I greatly respect. Well, that man is Dr. Vern Poitras. Dr. Vern Poitras wrote an article like 15 years ago on his website, [frame poitras.org](#),

and it was titled, How I Helped My Boys to Become Men. And I have to tell you that that article, that one article, Really shaped my thinking about how I was going to raise my boys and my boys are getting older. Now [00:02:00] I've been thinking about how to help them transition into manhood. You've probably been thinking the same thing about your own sons or maybe your grandsons, if you have grandsons.

Or maybe it's the boys in trail life troop that you serve with, or,

at church, whatever, maybe it's your nephews, whoever God has put in your life to help with this process, this episode is really going to help you out. I learned a ton and I cannot wait to share it with you.

So strap in, stay tuned because Dr. Verne Poitras is going to drop some incredible knowledge about the process that he came up with, the Bar Yeshua Ceremony. I really hope that this whole rite of passage process catches on and I hope more Christian families use it. Here are the specific things you're going to learn about in this episode.

The rationale behind the Bar Yeshua rite of passage, the Bar Yeshua process, a, you're going to get a [00:03:00] detailed breakdown of the rigorous training that went into it and how Dr. Poitras did this and how you can do it as well. You're going to learn how to balance the new responsibilities that you open up to your sons after they have become men.

How are you going to balance that? They're men now. And you're going to learn how Dr. Poitras and his wife incorporated teachings about all these different areas of life, skills that their boys needed to have. And really some very fascinating things, memorizing scripture, learning Greek and Hebrew, really cool stuff.

You're going to get solid guidance from a time tested approach that actually draws on a much older approach. You're going to learn more about that, but if you enjoy this episode, and this is something that you want to take further, you want to take your learning further. You have got to know about the hammer and anvil society.

This is the semi secretive learning fellowship of the think Institute. [00:04:00] That's the organization that runs this outfit. And the hammer and anvil society

consists of a cohort of brothers who are on the same journey together. And along with the cohort calls, there is a ton of resources. We've got, um, online learning courses that you can take, and then we discuss them.

Right now, as I recorded this on November 2nd, 2023, we are in the middle of a Christian worldview course. But next up is going to be our family leadership and discipleship course. If today's episode interests you, you are not going to want to miss that course. If you want to learn more about the Hammer Anvil Society, because this course is only open to Hammer Anvil Society members, I'm going to tell you how you can join at the end of this episode.

So, now, without any further jibber jabber, let's get into my discussion with Dr. Verne Poitras about the Bar Yeshua ceremony. [00:05:00]

Vern: Hi, I'm Dr. Vern Poitras, I teach New Testament and Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

WHY DID YOU DEVELOP THE BAR YESHUA CEREMONY, AND WHAT WAS YOUR THINKING?

Joel: Let's jump right in. Um, you developed the Bar Yeshua ceremony and rite of passage. Why did you develop it and what was your thinking?

Vern: Yes. Well at this, at this distance in time, I can't remember all the things, but one of the things that happened was we are living in an area of the greater Philadelphia that is heavily Jewish background and my. My boys had friends, many of whom were Jews, so they had Bar Mitzvah as a ceremony of where basically they're recognized as adults.

And so [00:06:00] that was in our thinking, but in addition, I realized that quite a few cultures of the world have a rite of passage, a rite of manhood. And. Boys, maybe even more so than girls, I think it's appropriate for both boys and girls. But for boys, especially, there can be insecurities of saying, well, am I an adult?

And am I being treated as an adult right, by my parents? And boys can actually try to prove that they're adults in very destructive ways. So, you know, they're okay. So it's when I get my first car and I can hot rod around, right? And maybe get into an accident. So that's just one example. But in, um, in Anglo culture in the United States, there isn't a clear at which you're recognized as an adult.

So that was a factor as well. But in [00:07:00] addition to all that, my wife and I felt that we should be proactive rather than passive in raising our Children, and we should be encouraging them positively to look forward to Christian manhood. We have two boys. No, no girls. We would have thought about it and done something appropriate for girls if we would had girls.

But with the two boys, we decided it. We're going to encourage them to become Christian men. And a lot of that fell on me because I'm a man. So, they, and, and boys naturally look to their fathers in that respect. So we. We planned this from actually a time when they were much much earlier in age when they were five and six or thereabouts, they began to hear about this because we wanted them not to be surprised, [00:08:00] and we wanted To their, their manhood not to be shaped by the surrounding culture, even if they had been going to Christian school, that comes into it too, because they went to Christian school for a time.

But, the Christian school, the main Christian school in the area, it had its own difficulties. No organization is perfect. And and also the personalities of our boys. And so in the end, we would put them from fifth grade onward in public school, where they had lots of contact with the Jews in the, in this.

District. But we thought we don't want them to be shaped just by the school. So we talked and we kind of debriefed them. Whenever they come home from school. We talked about what happened in school and we tried to give them critical filters from the Bible and from the Christian faith so that they were processing.

What they heard from a [00:09:00] Christian point of view, so, but that meant that I had to take even more initiative. And I think even a Christian school, if it, if it's a very good school, even it can't substitute for what the parents do. So we were positive about that. And I took some of my model from actually what happens in, in Presbyterian circles when people are preparing to be ordained.

Joel: Hmm.

Vern: I belong to the Presbyterian Church in America. It's a conservative Bible, believing Presbyterian Church. And there is a rigorous process before people are ordained. Ordered ordained. They go through several stages. They take tests. And I thought, well, you know, my boys are not necessarily going to be ordained, though.

And actually, the younger one, Justin is now being ordained in the B. C. A. The same denomination.

So he went, he went through all those things. [00:10:00] But, of course, at a much Later age, but we model it after that because because the tests cover quite a few things. They cover knowledge of the Bible, Old and New Testament, they cover doctrine.

In other words, what does the Bible teach in terms of its main doctrine? Things like that. Trinity, the deity of Christ, substitutionary atonement, we were determined that our boys would learn about those things and be able to communicate them from particularly when they go away to college but before that, you know, they, they had to digest them in an age appropriate way.

And then there was piety that's actually an element in Presbyterian. ordination process that your life is examined. Are you growing in holiness? Now that's a little bit harder to do for a presbytery [00:11:00] because they don't necessarily

have contact with the person, but the person is typically as a church that he's involved in and where he's an intern and being trained.

Well, we could observe that in a family and we gave them projects. One of the things was a mercy project that they had to be involved in of helping somebody out, cleaning somebody's house or bathroom, you know, when they were disabled or for one reason or another, they were not able to do that thing and delivering food to somebody in need, things like that.

So. We had, we tried to have a number of things, and there were also some practical things, like learning how to draw up a monthly budget.

So, you know, that's, it's not something only Christians should be doing, but it's part of biblical responsibility to, to use money well, but to use it in the service of God, and to think through How we're doing that.

So they had to draw [00:12:00] up a budget. They had to had to know, learn about human sexuality. Well, that's going to be something that that a parent has to face anyway. But I decided, you know, I'm going to be proactive and took the boys at an appropriate age and walk them through some things and they read a little booklet on basic facts of human sexuality, so that they would be.

Ready for also the more and more pagan environment around them that was had confusing messages. Well, here's, you know, here's the message that we're giving as parents. So it was all kinds of things like that. And it culminated when they were 12 years old, if they were ready, Jesus, of course, was, there's a record in the Gospel of Luke of Jesus going to the temple with his parents, but he shows some independence of a, of a proper time.

Kind, of course, [00:13:00] it does also record that he was submissive to his parents, but he stayed behind in the temple and showed that, you know, he was learning and also answering questions. As a boy, 12 years old, so we took that as a model. Now, the bar mitzvah of the Jews, it's simply when they're 13.

And, and we decided we'd like it to be one at their 12th birthday, but if they weren't ready, we would delay it a year or two years because we wanted to make sure that it wasn't just an automatic ceremony, but that they'd, they'd you know, they'd been able to. Grow in an appropriate way. So actually, with one of them, it was a little later.

It was before he was 13.

But with both of them, we managed to get it near to the 12th birthday. And one of the ideas here was to [00:14:00] build something that had support from the surrounding environment. And the fact of the existence of the Bar Mitzvah was actually useful. Because our boys were invited, their friends invited them to Bar Mitzvah, and they observed what was going on there.

So it was less strange to say, well, we're having a bar you shoe. It's a son of Jesus. That's the meaning of it. We're having that. And that's that's what we do as a Christian family, but it was more difficult for us because we don't have a whole culture to do it. So there was some degree of feeling as they were going through the process there.

There. Giving me feedback and saying, this is hard. Why do we have to do this? And,

Joel: right?

Vern: And parents have to be expecting that if they have any kind of program where they're [00:15:00] taking proactive involvement that in nobody else is doing. If nobody else is doing it, why are we doing it? And, you know, I particularly wanted, you know, they were polite, but we don't particularly want to do this at some points, at least now, one of the challenges is that my wife and I both realize we mustn't make it so hard That is discouraging.

And, and there's actually a verse then in Ephesians, where, where fathers are told not to exasperate their children. And so we had to watch that, but we also felt it must really mean something. And there are. skills and, and knowledge points that they should have if they're going to make decisions as Christian men, they should know, for instance, the book of the books of the Bible in order, right?

The names of the books of the Bible. Well, that's something that is, I hope taught in many Sunday schools to this day, [00:16:00] but it's certainly something as a starting point. But also beyond that, do you know, at least in a summary way, what's in that book?

Joel: Hmm.

Vern: So, so it went beyond just knowing the books of the Bible, the names, in order.

And they had to memorize a whole chapter of their choice. I

Joel: From each book?

Vern: Well, a whole chapter out of the Bible. I started with the idea. We'll memorize a short book. But as we got into it, I thought this is we've got to adjust to the capabilities of our Children. And that's another key thing,

right? So again, so that they don't become discouraged.

So both of our boys were We're somewhat smart, at least, and so and somewhat good at memorization, so it was feasible to push them to a certain extent. But [00:17:00] then again, it mustn't be so hard that the boy becomes discouraged and wants to give up.

Joel: So every culture, or so many different cultures around the world, have these rites of passage, these coming of age ceremonies. And in your very fine article on framepostras.org, which is a website that I go to all the time, by the way, you, you talk about, so the article, by the way, if anyone's listening, the article is called, How I Helped My Boys. To become Christian men. And I highly recommend that article. And that's, that's what sparked this conversation. But you mentioned how different cultures might require a boy to go out and kill a crocodile. Or I was just reading the other day about the Masai people where they would have their boys go out.

They had to kill a lion and. Yet

in our culture, it is so vague [00:18:00] and movies and media and music, and there are just so many different conflicting messages of, of here's when you become man. And really, if you look at. movies and the trends of movies over the last 20 years, you really do see an elongated adolescence, which adolescence is not a biblical concept anyway.

There are no adolescents in the Bible. So

my question would be, as someone who has studied this and who thinks deeply theologically, Why don't we, as Americans, as in Anglo culture of America, why don't we have rites of

passage like this? Why is it up to you and me to

create our own rites of passage?

Vern: Yeah, that's a good question, but it's something, you know, it's a heritage in effect from the culture of past generations. And if you have it, it's a blessing. If you don't have it. Well, can we create [00:19:00] it? Not easily. I was hoping and my wife was hoping, well, maybe we can make this catch on and and other people in our church will see what we're doing and somebody else would take it up.

It didn't happen, in fact but the article is out there because I want to encourage people to do something along this line. And if we were able to get it going as a whole culture, then it would support itself much more. It would be easier because with the Bar Mitzvah, for example, one of the things that the boys do is they learn how to read Hebrew.

They learn how to pronounce it. They don't. Learn the meanings of the words, but they learn how to read from the Hebrew Bible. They practice a passage and then at the ceremony, they actually read in Hebrew from the chosen passage. So they get to practice beforehand, but, but we knew where our boys. going to say [00:20:00] that.

And we thought, you know, that's something knowledge of the scripture is an important thing to do.

And I think there's many ways we could do that in the Presbyterian church, if I may, you know, I know we're got, we got loads of people from many denominations who really are committed to the scripture.

So, but the Presbyterians have a thing. Called catechism, but basically it's a teaching method where it's question and answer and young boys and girls both learn questions and answers and that way they learn some of the doctrine. Well, in many churches, I know also have Bible memorization for the children.

So my wife teaches junior high and every Sunday. There's a verse to memorize and she puts it on a card so that they can, you know, they can practice and then they get tested. So this is actually school. So I think we [00:21:00]

Joel: school. Putting the school back in

Vern: that's right. Yeah, that's right. So I think we could do more about that.

And the difficulty is that it's easy to just slide along right to do. minimal amount. So if, if a whole church is beginning to do something, then it's, you know, it's supported by the parents and they get involved and, and they see that

other children are doing it. At one point, one of the things that happened with, with my boys is that they learned the children's catechism.

It's the simplest version of the catechisms used in, in the Presbyterian church. So they learned that and then they were tested on it by the pastor. Because then somebody else besides the parent is involved and somebody else is recognizing,

you know, you have shown yourself to be, you know, to reach a standard

Joel: important to bring in, to bring in the pastor, to bring in others like

Vern: I think it is because [00:22:00] of the social aspect of it and, and it's a, it's a community thing. It's not simply what we as parents are doing and the ceremony. The Bar Yeshua ceremony, it was like a birthday party. And I think many of the people in our church, we invited the whole church. I think many of the people, even though it was new to them, they understood, okay, this is kind of like a birthday, but it's recognizing this transition to manhood.

And then I gave a little speech where I explained what it was. And the, the boy who is who's Bar Yeshua was, was then tested. As a follow up as a kind of spot check because he'd been tested privately earlier. We didn't want to put all the pressure on on just that, but a spot check to show and he read a little bit from from he better read a verse or or several verses in Hebrew and he read.

several verses in Greek as [00:23:00] part of his presentation. So that corresponded to the Bar Mitzvah, except Christians have two languages, right? We have Hebrew in the Old Testament and Greek in the New Testament. Well, that can be very formal, but, but again, other people could be involved. It happens that my wife and I know the biblical languages, but for somebody who doesn't, well, just involve somebody else who Can help to get a little feel for that.

And we felt the boys showing some knowledge of that. It's saying that's actually can be important because heretics of various kinds will falsely appeal to saying, Oh, this is Greek word means such and such. Well, it doesn't. Right. But that happens. So we thought. We want our boys to understand how it looks in the original languages.

So that was part of it too, but it doesn't need to be. But because of the Bar Mitzvah did it, we thought, you know, that's not so much of a stretch

[00:24:00] for us to do it too. But talking about the pastor and his test, when he tested the boys, then he actually presented them with a certificate before the whole congregation.

Joel: Are you talking about the spot test there in the ceremony, or, or This is the previous test that he had done with them.

Vern: Yeah, it's the previous test,

but before even they were ready for the bar yeshiva ceremony, he presented them a certificate before the whole congregation. Well, we hadn't asked for anything like that. We were rather flabbergasted, but I thought, you know, He's thinking because he wants to encourage parents and the children to do the same thing, and he's hoping, you know, that this will be which I say a gracious message, not a kind of.

Rigorous commandment, but it will be a gracious message. Hint, hint. Here's something you could do. Well,

Joel: wink, nudge, nudge. You [00:25:00] all should do this too. Yeah.

Vern: right. So I think he made a point of recognizing it because he, he was thinking in terms of, you know, we ought to be encouraging the children and the families

to to do this. So that's

an example of how, you know, this could fit into a larger culture.

Joel: All right. Well, um, I was very inspired by the article and I have been for years since I came across it, maybe in 2015, 2016, somewhere around there. Our oldest son, Jacob is right now. He is about to turn 12. He's a few weeks away from turning 12. And, um. So I've been, I've been very intrigued in this and we are blessed because we're part of an organization called trail life, which is, which I don't even know that it was around when your boys were young. I don't think it was, but it's sort of a Bible [00:26:00] based Boy Scouts,

outdoor education, that, that sort of thing. So it's, and it's. It's very cool because they offer manhood training, um, which I really like from what I've been able to learn about it. I do really like it. However, and. I don't want to throw anybody out throw the baby out with the bathwater here, but it's more of a passive process of learning. And what I like about the Bar Yeshua rite of passage is it

was very active. As I was reading about how you went through it, there's a lot to do and achieve and learn. And it was hard. And I actually was encouraged to hear that you're boys complained about how hard it was because that to me tells me it's like, that's good.

It

should, it should be hard. They should feel it. Not that it's exasperating. As you mentioned that, that verse, um, Ephesians six, four fathers do not provoke your [00:27:00] children to anger, but the second half of the verses, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. So it's right

there. That's

Your Your two part process, um, don't exasperate them, but do bring them up.

So you mentioned that you wanted your boys to learn Bible history. Are we talking, is this like Heil's Geschichte, the, the holy history, the history of salvation, or is it the history of Bible translation and manuscript tradition? What do you mean by Bible history?

Vern: Okay, yeah, I meant the first of those. Knowing the basic outline of the history of the world is given in the Bible. They did get exposed a little bit. To Bible translation, just because people need to, um, again, know a little bit effect of what the original languages are. And that, you know, there's been a history there, but the main thing [00:28:00] is the history that is in the pages of the Bible and to know, you know, the main high points of that.

So, and to be able to place people in the Bible along the timeline. So, you know, when did Samson live? What's important to understand that it was during the time of judges, and that was in between the conquest under Joshua and the rise of the monarchy with Saul and David.

So, so, you know, a boy ought to be able to, you know, say, okay, here's where Samson fits into the timeline.

But it's not just information, because Samson, even though he was a failure in some ways, he's a type, he's a shadow of Christ in his His deliverance of the people of his time that points to the final climactic deliverance in Christ. So we tried to teach our boys to understand that the Old Testament was giving them pictures leading to Christ.

Joel: Okay, now that makes, [00:29:00] that makes a lot of sense. And then just walking through the process, you had them read the Bible all the way through. You already mentioned how they had to know the main themes of the biblical books and give a summary. They had to understand, as you just alluded to with Samson, they had to understand how the biblical teaching centers on Christ, which I know is a major theme of your own writing as well. Um, your books, they had to know some Greek and Hebrew. And in your article, you mentioned that it was the amount of Greek and Hebrew was tailored to. Your boy's ability. And I, I

thought that was good, that that's a good way of living out Ephesians 6 4. One thing that I wanted to ask you about was you mentioned in the article that they had to memorize selected verses and passages of the Bible.

And now, is that what you were talking about when you said they got, they had to memorize a chapter of their choice? Is that right? Is that, or were there other verses that they had to memorize as well? Kind of like what your wife Diane does with Sunday school.

Vern: [00:30:00] Um, it was both, but the big, the big project was have a whole chapter of the Bible. It could be a favorite chapter, you know,

Joel: Okay.

Vern: but memorize that and then recite it at the Bar Yeshua ceremony.

Joel: yeah. Okay.

Vern: So they were showing, you know, they're showing here's, here's the things that we've done.

Joel: Hmm. Okay. Oh, that's wonderful. So they, they memorize. No. Did they just memorize the shortest chapter, you know, third John

Vern: Yeah.

Joel: like that? Or?

Vern: Yeah. Well, it, it has, you know, I didn't want them to escape, but I did want them to be, feel free to pick a favorite. Chapter, I think one of them, it was James one and to this day, he loves the book of James. So, so it, you know, something like that.

Joel: That, that, um, can have such an impact on a boy growing [00:31:00] up. I remember when I was in eighth grade, I was on my church's quiz team, and I had to memorize large swaths of Romans. And to this day, I love Romans 1, Romans 3, Romans 8, they just, they've gone deep down into my soul. And and that was right around that same age, 13, 14 years of age. Um, so you also mentioned that you mentioned the children's catechism, which, which I love. I actually wrote. My kids a catechism when our oldest was very young. I was inspired by one of my professors at Trinity and Mine is a little bit more New Covenant theology than it is Presbyterian.

You had them explain doctrines and respond to questions using their own words. how how did you assess that? How did you assess that they understood the doctrines? Um, was it rote memorization of a, a creed, a credal statement or the Westminster or how did you do that?

Vern: Right. Well, they did write, [00:32:00] memorize the children's catechism answers. But in addition, we, we ask them to be able to explain. they were reciting it because it can be, you know, just a one sided thing. Although I think rote memorization gives you an anchor. It's like your experience with Romans,

right? That you may, it's one thing to say, Oh, I know the content of Romans. It's another thing to really nail it down with,

with serious memorization. So, but, but at best it's a both hand. All right. And you can cite, for instance, someone, um, Where it says that the righteous man meditates on his law day and night.

Well, I tell you, our culture, we're so busy that it's very hard to know how do you do that?

But one way to do it is by memorizing, just word for word memorizing. And then you can [00:33:00] go over it and it comes back to you in the day, maybe. So you do think about it. So it's a both and. And that's what we tried to present.

And then they were, they were, when they were tested, they were tested again by an outside person who asked about the, the, um, children's catechism questions. But this person was was good at working with children and young people. He was able to ask questions that brought out what's the, what's the implication?

What, how do you understand this? And so that was a good way of encouraging them to, to understand as well as recite.

Joel: Okay. So again, you brought in an outside person who was good at working at speaking to them at their level. And, and that was very helpful. Okay. So just to recap where we've been so far, we've talked about the sort of. [00:34:00] dearth, the lack of ceremonies here in the United

States. We talked about how you were influenced by living in a part of Philadelphia, where there was a strong Jewish community and they, and their bar mitzvah ceremonies helped influence how you thought about putting together your bar Yeshua ceremonies. And now we've, we've begun to walk through the process and, and you've explained the importance of community. You've explained the importance of catechesis and, um, the, how you had to memorize doctrines. What I'm really intrigued by is the personal piety. Projects of service and mercy.

This

sounds like you wanted them to

practice their faith and to demonstrate

outwardly that they actually believed, you know, what Jesus says, if you love

me, you will obey my commands. What was your, what's the story of how you decided to incorporate that? Incorporate that.

Vern: Yeah, it's a [00:35:00] well again, I had the model of the training for ordination pastoral training in the Presbyterian denomination, because that's, that's a very significant. I mean, what does it matter if you know all the doctrine and you know all the Bible and you're not pious, you're not going to be a good pastor.

So, so of course, that's. And in a sense, that's a heart of it, right? Without holiness, no one will see the Lord. That's from the book of Hebrews. So, but, but of course we, we want to understand, we remain sinners saved by grace. We're not going to be perfect in this life,

but we encourage the, our boys to develop their own.

Life of, of reading Bible every morning, and we had morning devotions at the table. We got up early in the morning before the school bus came and stuff so we would have time to have a serious breakfast and we'd [00:36:00] get their stomachs full, which is an important part of the day for a growing boy.

But we would also, we would sing a hymn together. We would read a short passage of scripture. We'd pray together. So we tried to set a family example that made it easier, but then they were encouraged to have time. Each of them by himself and as part of the preparation for for the bar Yeshua I took a day of parent prayer and fasting with, with the one, the boy who was preparing to do it.

We would go out into, you know, one of the state parks or things around here and we would spend most of the day in prayer. We would talk some together and pray together and then we would split apart. So, yeah. That was, we were trying to you know, by example and by encouragement to, to have them develop their own personal life of [00:37:00] relation to the Lord.

But then the practical service project was, some of that was family. Right? We would, as a family, go and we would help out somebody in need, although, yeah, my memory is dim, but I think at one point one of, more of them served as a volunteer in a kind of homeless mission in the city, that kind of thing.

So, they were able to engage in projects which took them beyond simply the life of our family.

Joel: Okay, so again, you're helping them to Own their faith and own their personal piety, their, and, and piety is just another word for godliness. And we, we probably should clarify that because it's not a

word that gets thrown around all that much. And sometimes people think of, of piety as almost being a pietist as being head in the clouds or too heavenly minded to be any earthly good.

But that's not what you're talking about. You're talking about [00:38:00] personal practice of

godliness, right?

Vern: Yes. Yes. And I'm glad you made that point because I think there's always the temptation that Christians can come across as we are better than you. We are more holy than you in a sense of superiority, which is the last thing. You know, because one of the. Characteristics of genuine God, Godliness is humility.

Joel: right. That's

Vern: so, the practice of piety can actually be the opposite of true piety if it's a display. we, you know, obviously we tried to, to avoid that kind of thing. To have our boys grasp reality of the Christian life, but that's all against the background. I, I should say it openly, no matter what a parent does, and you know this, no matter what a parent does, you cannot give a child new birth.

Only the Holy Spirit

Joel: Yes.

Vern: can bring [00:39:00] about the new birth. And so we were helpless at the most basic level. As parents, right? We prayed, right? Which, which is a way of confessing her healthiness. We prayed. And in God's grace, both boys did make commitments to Christ at an early age. But that's essential, right? And none of this would have been possible apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.

Joel: Right. And, and you had them use devotional materials and a prayer diary. You mentioned

that in your article, do you recall what those devotional materials were? And I know you've got a long book list there at the bottom of your article, which I've actually copied and pasted into a

Google doc that I'm planning on using as sort of a bibliography for my own process. But do you remember what those The devotional materials were, would

you still recommend them? And then how did the prayer diary

work?

Vern: many of you are speaking? No, I don't, unfortunately, but I've seen, you know, our, [00:40:00] our church provides a kind of of once a month, you know, they come out with one of these daily devotional booklets that people can pick up and they're for adults mainly, but, you know, for a child who is getting into the The border of teenage years they could use something like that.

Joel: Okay. That makes sense. And then the, the prayer diary, how do you assess something like a prayer diary? Does he need to be

writing in it every day? Is it just sort of general use?

Vern: Yes, well, we encourage the writing every day, but yeah, it was very private. So

we didn't you know, we didn't pry into it, but we encouraged it.

Joel: So you encourage it and without checking, you know, what are you praying for today and

that sort of thing. And

that's, that really is where their individual walk with the Lord has to be. At a certain point, you can't [00:41:00] delve into his heart and see where he is with the Lord. He has to own that himself. Um, and you mentioned the, I'm sorry, go ahead.

Vern: Well, one of the things I, I think I would help to mention is the whole business of manhood that in some respects, because of the way American culture is set up, the transition to college is often like going over Niagara Falls. It's just huge. If the child moves away from home at that point, right? There's some, some, um, Young people choose to go to college locally and just live at home.

That's fine. But many, many go away. Our boys both chose colleges outside the immediate area. And what our thinking was, we don't want them to go over Niagara Falls. We want them to go over Little Rapids.[00:42:00] And for that purpose. They need to have independence while they're still within the house. They need to experience that rather than it being just a huge break.

It is everything being supervised by the parents at home. And then suddenly the whole world is, is up to their independent decision making. Yeah, they can call home, but how often is that going to take place? So. So college can be very threatening in terms of if they, you know, fall into the wrong path at that point, we wanted them to be able to explore and to experience independence while they're still here and while we're still there to meet and with them and hug them and kiss them every night and, you know, be there consulting and talking.

So that it isn't this huge break when they go away to college. So [00:43:00] part of the idea of, of, of right of passage is saying, okay, now you're an adult, you're living in our house still. And we had the experience actually with a couple of seminary student women, single women, who lived in a spare bedroom. For a time with us, and we had to have ground rules, not because we didn't trust them, but partly for their protection, especially for single women.

We want to know when you're going to be home. We don't know where you are just for your protection.

Joel: hmm. And is this, this is while your boys were still living

Vern: Yeah,

we're right. They were younger.

Joel: Okay.

Vern: A lot younger than these, you know, seminary student women, but we had that experience, my wife and I, and we had to have ground rules. And we thought, you know, we don't want this to just be anything goes, but we want to, we want to have certain rules because this woman is living in our house.

We [00:44:00] expect you would spend at least one evening meal per week with us and one week. Time for a week where we pray and talk with you, you know, and,

and we thought this is part of being the house. These are not relatives, right? They're not our daughters, but if they're going to be in our house, there are certain things that we expect so that we, you know, we get along well as a house that things don't, you know, reach some kind of crisis because nobody is talking and nobody is praying.

Together and that kind of thing. But because of that experience, we thought, okay, we have some idea of what it means to have an adult single person living in our house. Let that be the case with, of course, more recognition. There really are. Our sons are not just a guest, right? But we want to have some of that sense of independence.

But you're making many of your decisions. You're making decisions, for [00:45:00] instance, when do you do your homework? When do you read Leisure? When do you watch TV? What do you watch on TV? Now that's very dangerous.

Joel: Well, this is, I was so looking forward to asking you this because I have been fascinated by the way that you treated your young men, your sons, after they went through the bar Yeshua process, you gave them so much freedom and responsibility. So can you walk us through that? You, you, you mentioned. TV, even little things like you allowed them to excuse themselves from the table.

Do you know, I think about that with my own kids now as they're, because they're children, sometimes they'll just get up. And leave the table. And I said, no, your children, you, I can excuse myself. You cannot excuse yourself, but soon our oldest will be able to excuse himself. So can

you if you remember how did their role within the home, both in terms of rights and [00:46:00] in terms of

responsibilities changed once they became men,

Vern: All right. Yeah, well, we wanted it to be a big watershed. We didn't want it to be just a label and then everything continue right as it has always been. And if there's one regret, it is that we didn't even, we didn't go go farther in that direction. I think it was too hard for us as parents to kind of take our hands off sufficiently, but we tried.

Right. So if you're going to, you know, manage, if you're going to learn how to budget, then when you become a man, you have a man sized budget. So you, so they had an allowance that was much bigger, you know, they'd had practice with little bitty allowances right before that, a much bigger allowance, they pay a rent fee.

Every month they pay to buy their own clothes and other accessories, school accessories, whatever they need out [00:47:00] of a total budget, which is more man sized and and they have to show me the budget, you know, so we see it's this is reasonable and we're not Giving them so little money that they have to scrimp on everything.

We're not giving them so much that they're going to be tempted to be, um, profligate. But, but we, that was one area, but it was only one, right? It was setting your own time schedule as well. But then the issue comes up. Well, what if they're abusing this freedom? Then just as what would happen with these seminary women, who are in our house, if we saw something really getting out of line, it's the principle of Matthew 18, that you confront a Christian brother or sister with what seems to be, to you, to be a sin.

Joel: Um,

Vern: You don't just stand off and say, Oh, well, they'll say it now. Well, you pray, of course, but then you confront the person and maybe you [00:48:00] misunderstood. But maybe the person needs to repent. So even though the

person is adult, they're living in your house, you have responsibility, but they have responsibility as well.

And we thought, okay, that's our protection, but it's the same protection that we have in the church. Everybody in the church is bound to everybody else. And we're all looking after one another. And in the Presbyterian system, we have elders that are appointed by Christ to look after the flock. So they're doing that somewhat the way a father does in his own family.

So they have to be good family men. That's one of the criteria. So we had all that for us. And we thought we're going to try to, to treat our, our young man as a man, but living in our house. So we still have input, right? And we still can rebuke this person and call him back and [00:49:00] And give him a scripture that is, is calling out something that is a sinful pattern if we need to but in some ways, both our boys stepped up to it, right?

They stepped up to the bat because they understood and they had been trained and God was gracious, right? That's all the ultimate factor. So I was overall pleased with the degree to which they took responsibility and did not abuse it.

Joel: Now, if they had abused it, or if you're counseling someone else who's getting ready to bring their children through this process, let's say that they had abused it. Would you have decreased or diminished their man sized allowance? Would you have said, okay, you're not going to get paid this month? Would you have

gone back into parenting a child mode or? No, that's set in stone. How would that have

Vern: Yeah, yeah, we didn't have to face that.[00:50:00]

Joel: Okay.

That's a

Vern: I think, yeah, I think there are several paths available and some matter of Christian wisdom, what you would do, but I think our first resource would be try to continue to treat them as men as young man, but still as men. And to exhort them the way you would exhort another adult, right?

And if they didn't repent, then there's a process in Matthew 18 where you take it to the church. So actually, you know, we've got to take seriously the fact that

Christ has set up a specific process. But, but in the end, I'd saying, you know, if, if, if the crisis deepened and I would have to take aside the boy and say, look, it's, this is not working.

I'm sorry to say.

And, and we've got to recognize it's not working.

And you can't stay in our house if you don't submit to the authority of the household [00:51:00] head,

right? It's that simple, right? You, you, we've got to have basic guidelines and what I'm hearing from people with much more experience with young people like the James Dobbs is young people are craving this kind of boundary, even though they chafe against it, they want To know that there are boundaries and that you care enough for them

that the boundaries are set and there sometimes have to be clarified, you know, what, what are the boundaries.

But if there had been some degree of rebellion, we would have had attempted to deal with it within the bounds of the household, but still say. You know, there are boundaries. You can't insult my wife, right?

Joel: Right.

Vern: And this is, this is just not going to happen in this house.

Joel: Yeah.

That's right.

Vern: and, you know, if, if it happens and there's repentance, okay, but there will be a punishment for it.

Right. [00:52:00] So, so even though there's repentance, there's consequences. So the, and the, the Bible is actually so wise in how it deals with us As Christians, if we're adults and members of the church, that there can be consequences for things even though there's repentance. And, and so I think that the, the, the issue of sin and dealing with sin is there so often in the Bible, and one of the things that.

My wife and I tried to do, even the boys were young, was set a good example of how you deal with sin. So the boys would get into a quarrel, would get into some kind of fight, right? No, you did it, or you took, you know, this kind of thing. We would sit them down and we would walk them through a process of reconciliation based on Bible principles.

And we did it so many times they got used to it.

Joel: Well, this is what I wanted to ask you about is how did you give them [00:53:00] growth in understanding how to overcome sin? And I was wondering, did you have them read John Owen and the Puritans? Was it purely biblical? Was it more practical taking them through the

process of

Vern: right. It was almost, it was almost all directly Bible based. There, there's excellent literature out there, but, but some of it is, is, is ancient, a little stodgy, you know, in terms of the style of English. Some of the best stuff is unfortunately there. But yeah, it was mostly almost all biblical. But then the practice of living together as a family, right?

Because, you know, There's going to be sins. And, and I'm a parent. I'm going to sin. I've got to repent from time to time. And I set an example that way. To the boys, and that's again part of the exasperation, right? If the parent is always right

Joel: Right.

Vern: never admits that he's wrong, even when he is wrong,

that's [00:54:00] disastrous.

Joel: Yes. Yeah. That, that, that's certainly exasperating. Man. Um, so was there anything in the process that you, you wrestled with including, but ultimately decided against?

Vern: I can't remember anything because we had, you know, we had this picture of a very full. Process that, that, that covered a lot of the dimensions of what it means to become a mature adult in Christ. And I think we used all of them, but we adjusted them, right? So some of them become less full than they started at the beginning, or they felt out a little more.

We adjusted in that respect. But we used all the aspects and, you know, we've already talked about it because they all belong to what it means to have Christian maturity.

Joel: Yeah, that makes sense. Um, [00:55:00] some of the things that you wrote about that you included, there was finances in terms of tithing, budgeting. You talked about that. Um, what I thought was really interesting is you taught them table etiquette. Greeting etiquette, letter etiquette, conversational etiquette, sexual etiquette, could it, I'm hesitant to ask this, but I, I feel like I need to ask this sexual etiquette.

Can you explain that if, if you think that it's appropriate to explain that?

Vern: Yeah, well, I mean, nowadays it's all about, are you going to have sex with your girlfriend before you're married, right? It's that basic. And, and of course the Bible, the answer is also basic. No, you're not.

Joel: That's right. Exactly. Very cut and dry.

Vern: But of course there's a background and, and I understood, you know, in training boys.

That it has to be not only the commandment, but also the [00:56:00] rationale. God is wiser than you. And to some extent we can say, here's things of why this is the way it is because marriage is so intimate relationship. You have to protect it has to be exclusive. So that, so that and that, that is part of what understanding of how you.

If you're looking forward to marriage, how you look forward to that marriage and, and train yourself in the kinds of attitudes and behavior that you would have towards your wife once you are married. So it all fits together rather than saying, Oh, here's a rule. It is a Bible rule. We have to take it seriously, but there's a reason for the rule.

So we tried to give them some understanding of that. But then also it meant simply treating. The, the their peers boys and girls with respect for [00:57:00] their male and female bodies. And of course, that's become much more an issue now than it was then because people are all confused. But even then, I think it was worth saying, right, you respect the integrity of somebody else's body.

You don't touch the person. You don't, you know, get into their space without. There being a, you know, good reason if there's medical doctor or something like that, it's very different, but

you respect that and, and the girls your age, you try to make sure that they are respected and protected physically as well as emotionally.

And so, you know, if somebody else is, is doing something to them that's wrong, then you call the teacher or if the teacher is not around you, you try to do what you can,

those kinds of things. So it was, it was a bunch of things that used to be [00:58:00] part of the culture of previous generations, but I think of.

Largely dropped out and it was partly Emily Emily post right of writing. Thank you. Notes and

Joel: Miss Manners?

Vern: and putting, you know, the fork goes here and the spoon goes here when you set the table. And, you know, there's all kinds of things like that that we have to come up with. One of the boys to understand they are part of showing respect for the tradition of a particular culture.

You know, if you grew up in another culture, it would have its own traditions and that's okay. But we we show respect for people around us by. Paying attention to these rules, not because it's, you know, it's not a sin to put the fork in the wrong place,

but we show respect for these social graces because there are ways of symbolically showing respect for other people.

So we tried to build that into it, and again, to give it a Christian [00:59:00] basis of saying, look, it isn't a matter of sin, but it is a matter of showing respect to other people.

Joel: Yeah. Yeah. That makes sense. And you also included apologetics training, which,

man, I wish I could have been there for Vern Poitras's apologetics training to his sons. I, I've benefited so much from your own writings and, um, Did you, um, I mean, did you just say, here's a stack of my books, you know,

Vern: Well, look, I didn't have, I didn't have so many books at that time, but no, we tried to do things with age appropriate. But in the case of my boys in both for both of them in fifth grade, they started for the first time into public school and, and I knew that there would be many challenges and that would be ongoing.

So that summer, I gave them Human Sexuality 101, in effect, and Apologetics [01:00:00] 101,

Joel: Okay.

Vern: because I knew that both of those would come up in the school environment.

Joel: Yes. My parents did the same for me when I was young, especially, I remember they would say, you know, you're going to be asked questions where they're going to expect you to give the answer from evolution. And what I want you to do, Joel, and when I was little, they'd say, give the right answer or give the, the answer that they're looking for, but then underneath it, right, here's what we believe as Christians. I, I credit a lot of that training to my later interest in apologetics myself. Um, you know, that training at a, at a young age, um, I noticed that on the list of books that helped you through this

process, you had some RC Sproul

books and RC Sproul of course was not a presuppositionalist for our listener.

Presuppositional apologetics is the method that we use in the Think [01:01:00] Institute on this channel and this podcast. Um, and Dr. Poitras is. A writer of he's a presuppositionalist. Dr. Poitras, I noticed, I noticed that you had an R. C. Sproul apologetics book. Um, help, help me understand how did you incorporate that?

And, and, you know, why wasn't it just all Van Til

all the time?

Vern: Yeah, well, Cornelius Van Til's writings, although I am a great admirer, admirer, they're not easy to understand. So, so I wasn't going to assign those, you know, to boys who are who are young. But we did find one book by Susan Schaefer McCauley Fancy Schaefer's daughter, How to Be Your Own Selfish Pig.

It's of course a joke, the title is. But it's very good because it's got cartoons and it's got you know, and it deals with many of the major worldviews that you hear. [01:02:00] You can hear from the junior high level, there's, they're already there, but they're there in terms of much more practical mottos and things.

So, so that was a primary resource. And as for using Sproul, um, Sproul is so gifted and blessed we are so blessed to have him. That, that, and much of what he does can be incorporated into the larger framework of presuppositionalism, even though, yeah, technically he disagrees with it, but incorporating means basically understand the, the nature of the human heart, which he too understood.

The heart is darkened until Christ eliminates it by the Holy Spirit. And so arguments that are presented, whether they are on the basis of general philosophical things or arguments for the resurrection of Christ, [01:03:00] they are to be presented in A framework where you understand that other people's assumptions differ and a non Christian assumptions differ so that you don't let the fact that these people are resisting or that they have objections.

You don't let that throw you off.

Joel: Right on. Thank you for explaining that. There was, as I was reading through the process, and I've heard you speak about it, I wanted to ask you about this. Was there any physical or athletic aspect to the process? I didn't see any, but I was curious about. If you omitted that, why, or were they getting that in some other way?

Vern: Yes, well, it may be that it should have been included. We didn't, my wife and I, you know, we were, I say we because we were working on it together. We didn't include it, I think partly because the boys were involved in [01:04:00] sports and extracurricular things and enjoyed that and it didn't seem necessary to make a separate point of it.

Joel: Okay. Yeah. That's something that I've thought about is perhaps adding in a component of self defense what you said earlier about wanting to protect. the opposite sex from attacks, things like that. I'm thinking being able to, to defend yourself and those around you might be something good to consider putting in there.

Um,

Vern: Yeah,

Joel: can you just,

if you can remember what this was like, how did you feel when your boys completed that ceremony, the bar Yeshua ceremony in front of 90 people from your church and family? What was that feeling like for you as a dad?

Vern: Oh, it was, it was very satisfying. Also scary because, because I knew, okay, [01:05:00] now I have to live up to, you know, the promises of this new phase of independence and what's going to happen. And, you know, there's a lot of uncertainty there, but yeah, it's, it was satisfying. And, and I was also. Gratified by the degree to which people in the church participated in it you know, were able to, to come alongside in a firm, even though it was, it was a new thing for them,

but they were, and they, they could see, oh, it's kind of like a birthday party, but we're recognizing them as, as now young men.

Joel: Yeah.

Was there anything that you,

Vern: some people, brought it. Little gifts, for example.

You know, we didn't ask. Yeah, right. We didn't ask them to do that, but they did. And it was a good touch.

Joel: Was it, did it take place close to their birthdays or was it totally a separate time of year?

Vern: It [01:06:00] was separate. I think it was fairly close, although the one boy, I think we had to delay a few months.

Joel: Okay. If you could go back and do it again, is there anything that you would have done differently?

Vern: I think the main thing would be to pray and try harder to be consistent in giving them the independence after The ceremony, because I think,

as I mentioned, it was a little hard for my wife and me to, to, to take our hands off.

Joel: Yeah. Man, that is something that. I am internally struggling with myself just because, well, the idea of having your child in your home, living with you and, and, treating him like a man, that's, that's hard. That's a big transition for any parent. As fathers, Oh, I'm sorry, go ahead.

Vern: [01:07:00] Yeah, and I, I think it's, it's hard for, for moms to, in a sense, the, a boy or girl is always their boy or girl and they never cease being a mom and their emotional ties are so strong. I think dads have to respect the fact they are going to have to help their wives, you know, with encouragement and with a prayer to, to make that transition.

and it's, it's never going to be easy. And But, but the, the other side of it is that no matter how old your child becomes, they need to understand they, they can come as it were home, you know, emotionally speaking, and they can let down their hair and they. If to the degree they want to, they can become like a little child temporarily, but I think, you know, that we don't want to force that on.

[01:08:00]

Right. We want them. We there has to be a transition. It's this thing of saying, you know, the transition from from mainly a kind of one way giving of wisdom to the child to transition between equals of saying it's a dialogue. Right. And, and I'm going to be Having to respect things that this child has now seen being out in the world that I might not be familiar with.

We dealt with that as parents with respect to the social media. Facebook was just coming on and email was just coming on where we're grateful. We don't have to deal with with what it is today because it's so much more difficult, you know, so many more things. But we had some of that experience because yeah.

Our Children were more comfortable with it than we were,

right? So, so we had to keep talking to them and listening respectfully to what [01:09:00] they were experiencing that that might have an element of novelty that we were not on board with yet.

Joel: Okay. So we're talking about the difficulty and unique challenges that every family is ultimately going to face with their children, their boys in this case, coming to a phase of life where they're able to not only just receive wisdom, but they're able to participate in, I think the term you used. Yeah.

Was family council where you and

Vern: Yeah.

Joel: and that, that's quite a transition.

Vern: Yeah, and we wanted to make that again a definite point when they became men, they participate in the family council. And that's something we haven't talked about yet. But up to that point, my wife and I had made many decisions. Independent and, you know, when we need to, to consult what the voice [01:10:00] desire was, but then independent as the two of us making decisions and beyond that point, obviously, there are still things that is intimacy of husband and wife where you would discuss privately, but many of the family decisions now.

You want to have the, the adult person, , who is your child participating in fully in the discussion, right? Of, of pro and con as we're trying to work for due decision, where are we gonna to, to take our vacation? Are, are we gonna buy a a, a new car or let repair the old one at this point? You know, all kinds of things that come up.

That they're, they are freely participating in.

Joel: That is very daunting. I mean, the idea of allowing that kind of not just, that's not just personal freedom, but that's full incorporation into the world of adulthood within the family. [01:11:00] And so I would imagine for our listener thinking about this, he's, he's going, well, that sounds very appealing, but I'm so far from that right now. And, you know, we, I'm sure we have dads listening who their boys are. Very young others who are already 11, 12, 13, even older, and they want to start the process late. What first steps can a father take to, to begin the process?

Vern: Yeah, well, I mean, a lot depends on whether the children are young and it can be introduced gradually and, and kind of talked up, right? So with our boys five and six years old, it was mainly a matter of talking it up. Right. We weren't doing a lot, although we gave them, you know, some little learning projects and things is kind of homeschool supplement that kind of thing.

But talking up the idea. Look, this is this is what we plan for you [01:12:00] when you get to be 12 and so that could start early, but for somebody who starts late, one of the things to contemplate is to say, to admit freely to the child, um, well, talk to your wife at first,

Joel: Always good

Vern: right? Because things, you know, but husband and wife need to be on the same page.

Talk to the Lord even before that,

Joel: Better

Vern: taking that for granted. But then when it comes to talking to the child to say you know, I've been praying to the Lord and mommy and I've been talking and, and we've changed our minds about some things. And, and maybe, you know, depending on how you feel about it, saying, we've actually had to repent because we feel there's some things that we could have been doing with you that we didn't, and we're sorry, but we're glad, you know, that you're our [01:13:00] child, glad that we've had the opportunity, but we want to do some of these new things beginning now, right?

So that way, yeah. It isn't just coming like a ton of bricks,

Joel: Right.

Vern: but comes in the context of of admitting that I'm fallible and that I'm trying to grow in how to be a parent.

Joel: So your son's, there's a, there's a, there's a little bit of a delay. So sometimes I'll start talking and, and not realize that that you haven't finished your thoughts. So please continue.

Vern: No, well, I did think about the fact that sometimes parents wake up to the fact, this is a more major issue, they wake up to the fact we've been doing our child discipline just too much. Back end front. We've been doing a lot of things wrong. And what are we going to do? And I [01:14:00] think the best thing is to plan for it first, right?

To pray, to be together as husband and wife, to be able to agree, to consult other parents whom you respect so that, so that you've got a good plan going forward. But then when it comes to talking to the child, to begin with repentance to say, You know, we're, we've blown it as parents because that, that again is the first thing that's going to open a child to the possibility of a new kind of relationship and that's hard, but,

but I think it's a significant clue because then you can say, you know, here's how we're going to do it.

We're not going to do it perfectly. Please pray for us, right? But

here's gonna be the new way we're approaching it. And and my wife and I, based on [01:15:00] the Bible, we felt that discipline has to be loving. First of all, has to be motivated by the grace of God in your own life. But it has to be firm and there have to be clear boundaries and there have to be punishments.

And, and those punishments, we believed in, in spanking. It was not beating the child. It was, it was control. And it was, don't do it when you're, when you're out of control with a hanger.

But, and, and we believed in that. because it's partly because it's biblical, partly because it's over quickly. And, and we found that our children were, were grateful for it being over rather than, you know, you have a timeout that extends 10 minutes, 20 minutes and Spanky's all over.

And then you can be You can be normal again, right? You can hug and and be through the the hard part. So, so, but that's one thing. [01:16:00] That's an example of something where if parents have been doing it another way and they decided, you know, we're, we've got to do it. this way. It makes sense. Then introduce it in an appropriate way that respects the child as a person rather than just, you know, um, coming down with a new program without explanation.

Joel: Have Ransom or Justin, they're, they're in their mid to upper thirties at this point. Have either of them taken on the desire to do this with their own children? If they have children, have they, have they had a desire to, to duplicate the process and pass it on

Vern: Yeah. Yeah. Um, right. Good question. Yeah, they're in their late thirties now and they both have Children. Well, the one [01:17:00] that one of them has only a single daughter. So that would be a little different. Although it would be another, it would be another matter to discuss daughters coming of age. My wife and I think it's appropriate, but we never had a daughter and Providence of God.

So we're not the first ones to, you know, be able to speak about that, but we would have done something. It would have been different. We believe boys and girls are different. Yes. Yeah. But it is because the Bible tells us, right. We're not, we're not going to take our lead from the confusions of the culture, but going back to your question, neither of the boys has mentioned that they're going to do it themselves.

Joel: Okay.

Vern: I'm not terribly worried about that. I think the main thing is, are you being a good parent, right? You praying for your children and teaching them the gospel and lovingly disciplining them, those kinds of things.

That's the [01:18:00] core of it. And this was kind of an extra, you know, an extra enhancement, an extra layer on the cake that we hoped would be.

Profitable for them. So if they want to take it up, that's fine, but it's up to them. So that's, yeah, that's what the situation is.

Joel: Where can our listener go to get more of your work?

Vern: Well, you mentioned already the website. It's frame hyphen poitras dot org. And John Frame is my friend and colleague, and I have posted many of our writings there. I've made a point of having book contracts that allow me to post the whole book after a delay of a year. The publishers have been gracious to do that, I'm grateful, but I want to make things available.

For now and for coming generations, I have [01:19:00] provisions in my will for the maintenance of the website after I've departed and gone to be with the Lord.

Joel: Oh, well, I read Symphonic, your book, Symphonic Theology last year on my Kindle, which I got from your website. So incredibly helpful. Thank you so much. I'm working my way through another one of your books now on, on time and chance and God and probability. And so just, just wonderful stuff. Thank you for your work.

I would love to have you on again sometime to talk about a more philosophical or theological topic. Um, I have sort of personally taken on the mantle of trying to, and I've, I've emailed you about this, but trying to preserve and even further the work of Dr. Frame and yourself in terms of tri perspectival theology and, um, and, and approaching reality and philosophy and theology from three perspectives. So would love to talk with you about that, but man, I'm [01:20:00] glad we got to talk about rites of passage and,

um, the Bar Yeshua ceremony.

So Dr. Poitras, thank you so much for, for coming on. Hope to talk to you again

Vern: Okay, thanks again for inviting me and the Lord be with you.

Joel: and also with you.

So now you know. The Bar Yeshua rite of passage is there to help your boys, your sons, to become believers. Godly men of integrity and character. This is something that I'm going to implement with my boys. Lord willing, it's something that I want to do. And along the way, I want to keep you apprised of how it's going.

So I plan on posting updates and maybe doing more episodes about this. And you know what? If you want to hear an episode about like a, um, how would we go through the bar Yeshua, but for girls, if you've got daughters, as I do as well, that's going to be something that I'm going to be working through as well.

Maybe we'll call it a bat Yeshua, but, if that's something that you would think would be helpful, please let me know. Drop me a [01:21:00] line. If you're watching this on YouTube, you can comment below. If you're listening on the podcast, feel free to get in touch by going to thethink.

institute slash contact.

Now I mentioned. The Hammer and Anvil Society earlier, and again, if family discipleship, family leadership is something that you want to explore and you want to do it in a community of brothers who are holding each other accountable, who are seeking to walk the journey and fulfill the ministry that the Lord has given us as Christian men, the Hammer and Anvil Society is for you.

You can learn more about it and, how much it costs, what the perks are, what the benefits are by going to the think dot Institute slash society. Hope to see you there. And if you have any questions, please let me know at the think dot Institute slash contact.

All right. Now be sure to visit frame dash point dress.

org to check out all of Dr. Poitras is writings. And [01:22:00] Poitras is spelled P O Y T H R E S S.

Thank you for listening to Worldview Legacy. This episode was produced by yours truly, Joel Sedekes, and is a production of the Think Institute. We are a Christian teaching and outreach non profit organization that seeks to help regular believers to become worldview leaders.

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Until next time, stay blessed by God's grace.